

Fiscal Highlights

Higher Education Subcommittee Meeting - Spencer C. Pratt

On September 29, 2015, the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee held its interim meeting. Several items were on the agenda for discussion affecting funding of, and information dealing with, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE and the Utah College of Applied Technology (UCAT). The Analyst presented a comparison of tuition projections for FY 2016 that were made by the Analyst during the 2015 General Session to those included in the USHE FY 2016 budget. Generally, the projections overestimated the current budgetary figure, due to tuition increases that were lower than any year since 1999-2000, and because the projections included the portion that is used to cover a portion of compensation increases, which was then added to the estimates. The Analyst noted that in the future, a revision to the methodology will be made to account for this piece of tuition increases.

Representative from the University of Utah and Utah State University reported on how they plan on improving and strengthening graduate programs with \$4 million appropriated to those two institutions. Those two institutions also reported on how they used federal grant funds to cover some of the Operations and Maintenance (O & M) costs. The Subcommittee reviewed FY 2015 budgetary information for each USHE and UCAT line item, in anticipation of the 2016 General Session. Commissioner Buhler and President Brems then discussed how their respective groups had implemented intent language requesting various performance measures.

President Brems then provided training and educational information of the Utah College of Applied Technology. He explained how the campuses determine which courses to provide to meet employer and market demands. UCAT enrollment is made up of secondary students (High School and post-secondary students (adults)). Adult students can be categorized as certificate-seeking, occupational upgrades, and other post-secondary. In FY 2015, UCAT awarded 7,582 program certificates and 757 occupational upgrade certificates, reporting a completion rate of 88.4%. President Brems then reported on funding approved over the past three years for campus equity and campus capacity.

Higher Education items from the Building Block/Fiscal Note follow-up report that was presented to the Executive Appropriations Committee were shown to the Subcommittee. These include Mission-Based Funding (Distinctive Mission and Equity); Performance-based Funding; UCAT Campus Capacity; USU Graduate School; S.B. 38 Snow College Concurrent Education; College Readiness Initiative; UCAT Campus Equity, Custom Fit, Scholarships for Students with Intellectual Disabilities, and Marketing and Messaging.